

Eligibility Requirements for Issuance of Texas Election Certificate



On January 3, 2012, the Department of Public Safety will be prepared to issue Texas election certificates to persons who are obtaining one for the purpose of voting and **do not** have another form of photo identification acceptable for election purposes (see eligibility below).

Who is NOT eligible to apply for a Texas Election Certificate?

- Persons who have been issued any of the following documents which may be used for voter identification purposes:
 - Texas driver license (includes occupational license with photograph) – unexpired or expired less than 60 days;
 - Texas identification card – unexpired or expired less than 60 days;
 - Texas concealed handgun license – unexpired or expired less than 60 days;
 - United States military identification card containing the person's photograph;
 - United States passport – unexpired or expired less than 60 days;
 - United States citizenship certificate containing the person's photograph; or
- Persons who are **not** United States citizens (i.e. permanent residents, asylees, refugees or temporary visitors).

Who IS eligible to apply for a Texas Election Certificate?

The department shall issue an election certificate upon request to persons who **do not** have one of the forms of acceptable photo identification listed above, and are:

- a registered voter in Texas and present a valid voter registration card, or are eligible to vote and submit a voter registration application to the department;
- a United States citizen;
- a resident of Texas; and
- age 18 or above. (To be eligible to apply for voter registration, a person must, on the date the application is submitted to the registrar, be at least 17 years and 10 months of age.)

How does a person apply for a Texas Election Certificate?

- visit a Texas driver license office;
- bring documents to verify U.S. citizenship;
- bring documents that meet the department's identification policy; and
- request and complete an application for the election certificate.

Section 521A of the Texas Transportation Code states that:

- an election certificate may not be used or accepted as a personal identification certificate;
- the department may not collect a fee for an election certificate or to reissue an election certificate issued under this section;
- the department may require each applicant for an original or renewal election certificate to furnish to the department proof of identification and U.S. citizenship; and
- the department may cancel and require surrender of an election certificate after determining that the holder was not entitled to, or gave incomplete information in the application for, the election certificate.



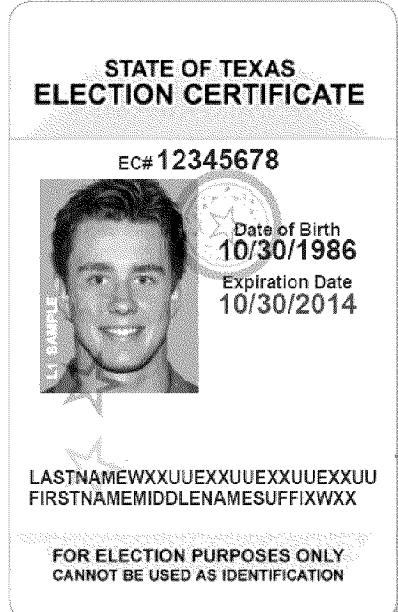
Texas Election Certificate (Features)

Election certificates will be issued to expire in 6 years. The certificate will not expire for persons age 70 and above.

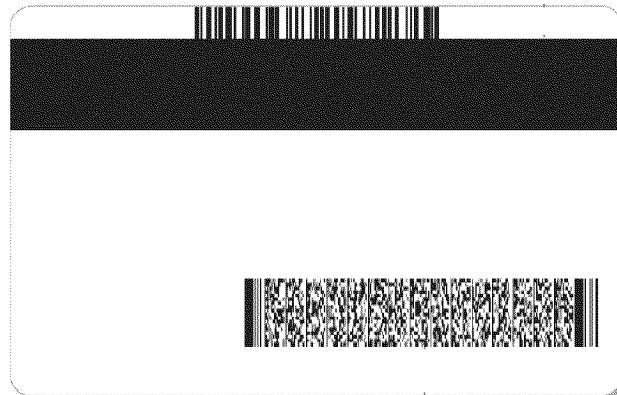
Election certificates are produced in a vertical format and do **not** include:

- card holder's signature (*The card holder will sign the temporary election certificate.*)
- address of the card holder. (*The temporary receipt will include card holder's mailing address and will be accepted for election purposes.*)

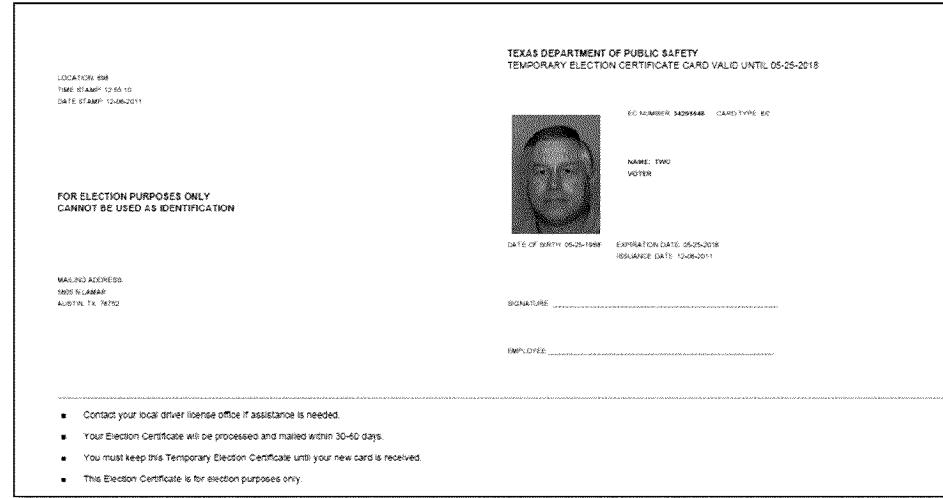
Note: The election certificate is **NOT** acceptable to establish proof of identity as a primary, secondary or supporting document when applying for a Texas driver license or identification card.



Texas Election Certificate (front)



Texas Election Certificate (back)



Texas Election Certificate (Temporary)

Procedures for Texas Election Certificate Issuance

The procedures for issuing an election certificate are very similar to those used to issue a driver license or identification card. Similarities include:

- verifying the person's identify and lawful presence (U.S. citizenship)documents;
- entering the person's personal data:
 - name,
 - date of birth,
 - address (physical and mailing)
 - physical description
 - U.S. citizenship
 - voter registration
- collecting images, photo, thumbprints and signature; and
- scanning documents

There are procedures that only apply to the issuance of an election certification. When issuing an election certificate, it is also important to keep in mind the following:

- there is never a fee charged to issue an election certificate;
- there are no duplicate or modify transactions when issuing an election certificate. When an election certificate is lost or expires, re-issue the card and the expiration date will be extended to six years from the date the card was re-issued;
- there is an option to "edit" personal data on the election certificate;
- the option to "remake" the election certificate without changes to the record is available;
- There are two different search engines in DLS; the current one for driver license and identification cards and a new one for election certificates. No election certificate results will be found when searching in the driver license and identification card *Search Applicant* screen and no driver license or identification card records will be found when using the *Search Election Certificate* screen.
- documents scanned for an election certificate will not be available for review by customer operations employees in either the election certificate application or DLS. For this reason it is important to inform the person that if they choose to apply for a driver license or identification card in the future, they will be required to provide the same documents before a driver license or identification card will be issued.
- a social security card is not required for an election certificate and social security online verification (SSOLV) will not be performed.
- PDPS, CDLIS, and TCIC/NCIC external checks will not be performed for an election certificate

Prior to Issuance of an Election Certificate.

1. Conduct a search in DLS to determine if the applicant has an unexpired Texas driver license or identification card on record. When searching for a record in DLS:
 - enter the person's name and date of birth and/or social security number and select the "*Search Applicant*" button at the bottom of the screen.

Do not issue an election certificate if a matching record is found under the following circumstances:

 - the dl/id is unexpired or expired less than 60 days. The person has a card on file which can be re-issued and used for election purposes.
 - DLS indicates the person is ineligible (i.e. suspended, revoked, cancelled or denied) if the person maintains the card in their possession.
2. Review the documents presented by the applicant to verify identity and U.S. citizenship.
3. Process the election certificate application and issue a temporary receipt.

Questions/Answers regarding Election Certificate

1. What is the reason for issuing an election certificate?

The law was designed as a measure to prevent voter fraud without denying those that cannot afford photo ID the right to vote.

2. Will a person whose driver license or identification card that has been expired more than 60 days, be eligible to apply for the election certificate?

Yes – the rule states a person is NOT eligible if the dl/id has not expired or expired less than 60 days. Therefore, an election certificate may be issued to a person if their dl/id card is expired more than 60 days. Remember, the person must request the photo ID for voting purposes.

3. If a person has lost their unexpired driver license or identification card are they eligible to apply for an election certificate?

No – again the rule states a person is NOT eligible if the dl/id is unexpired or is expired less than 60 days. Apologize to the customer for the situation and invite them to apply for a renewal of their driver license or identification card which can be used as photo identification for election purposes.

4. What if the person tells you they do not have money to pay for an identification or driver license? Can we inform them of the election certificate?

No – the person should let you know they need a photo ID to vote and do not have money to pay to replace their driver license or identification card. Take care to avoid offending the person and be sensitive to their situation. If you are unsure whether to issue the election card seek assistance from your supervisor.

5. Will the occupational license with a photo included on the card be considered an acceptable form of photo id for voting purposes?

Yes – it is for all purposes a driver license.

6. Will we issue election certificates to homebound applicants?

No. If homebound applicants can prove disability to the Secretary of State they are exempt from the ID requirement. Also, if a person is homebound they will most likely be voting by mail and an ID is not required for mail-in ballots.

7. Can the election certificate be used as an acceptable form of identification to apply for a Texas driver license or identification card?

No. The election certificate is not acceptable as proof of identification when applying for a TX dl or id because the statute clearly states that the card is for election purposes only and cannot be used as identification so the individual would not be eligible for an election certificate.

8. Does a person have to surrender an election certificate if they wish to apply for a TX driver license or identification card?

No – a person will not be required to surrender an election certificate before being issued a TX driver license or identification card.

9. Is an expired U.S. Passport acceptable to verify proof of U.S. citizenship for persons applying for an election certificate?

Yes – the U.S. Passport can be used to verify U.S. citizenship for those applying for an EC. However, if the U.S. Passport has not been expired more than 60 days, it may be accepted for election purposes.

10. Can a person apply for a replacement of an election certificate?

Yes- a person can apply for a replacement of an EC by presenting one of documents from the list of acceptable forms of identification. No fee will be charged for the transaction. The new certificate will be issued for a six-year term, so a replacement will be treated more like a renewal.

11. When an election certificate holder moves or relocates, are they required to change the address on their card?

No. Because an address is not included on an election certificate, there is no need to apply for a change of address. The person can update their voter registration address with the Secretary of State.

12. When a person is issued an election certificate does this mean they are automatically registered to vote?

No – the Secretary of State is responsible for voter registration. The information collected on the election card will be sent electronically to the Secretary of State to approve the card holder's voter registration application.

13. Will renewal notices for an election certificate will sent to card holders?

No – it will be the card holder's responsibility to renew the election certificate.

Additional information regarding issuance of a Texas Election Certificate:

- The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) is currently reviewing the new statute to determine whether the state of Texas has the right to require voters to present an acceptable photo identification document at the polls to be able to vote in an election. Until the DOJ renders their decision, voters will not be required to present photo-identification to vote.
However, DPS will move forward and begin issuing election certificates on January 3, 2012 to be in compliance with the law in an effort to avoid being blamed for anyone's inability to vote if the DOJ does not approve implementation of the law.
- DPS is expected to complete testing and be ready to launch the election certificate by December 20, 2011. While the election certificate system will be in place, it is important to remember **NOT** to access the application or issue any election certificates prior to January 3, 2012.
- Keep in mind there is the possibility that we will issue election certificates and later the DOJ may return with a decision that Texas cannot require photo ID. However, keep in mind the cards can only be for election purposes only and not for ID to apply for government services, for financial reasons, to enter a federal building, or to board a plane.
- Plans are to add an additional category in Nemo-Q for election certificate applicants to track the number and processing time for election certificate applicants. The new category is expected to be ready by January 3, 2012.

Suggested responses to customer inquiries concerning apply for the Texas Election Certificate

If a customer comes in and requests the election certificate prior to January 3, 2012, provide the following information:



At this time, the Department of Public Safety is not issuing the election certificate. However, we are prepared to comply with the law passed during the last legislative session and begin issuing election certificates to U.S. citizens who are eligible to vote in Texas and do not have another form of acceptable photo identification beginning in January 2012. You are welcome to come back any time after January 2nd and apply for the election certificate. (At this point you may also provide information on the requirements and determine their eligibility to prepare them for their next visit.)

It may be helpful to interview persons requesting an identification card to clarify whether they wish to apply for a Texas ID card or the Texas Election Certificate. Options to begin the conversation:

Employee: *How may I help you?*
 Customer: *"I'm here for an ID?"*
 Employee: *An identification card is \$16 and requires proof of identity and lawful presence.*
 Customer: *"No, I thought the ID was free."*
 Employee: *There is no charge for the Texas Election Certificate which is only used for voting purposes.*
Are you seeking photo identification for voting purposes?

Information to share with individuals who have been issued a Texas Election Certificate

Because the election certificate and DLS are on two different search engines, employees will be unable to view documents after they are scanned into the election certificate application. For this reason customers who have been issued an election certificate will be required to present their proof of identification and U.S. citizenship documents again when applying for a driver license or identification card. To convey this information to a person who has been issued an election certificate, consider the following dialogue:

Employee: *Your election certificate will expire in 6 years and can only be used for photo identification to vote during an election and not for any other purpose. Later, if you decide you would like to obtain a Texas driver license or identification card the election certificate, you will be required to present your proof of identification and U.S. citizenship documents again at the time you apply.*

Election Certificate Processing Agreement

I have attended training to inform me of qualifications, for issuance of an election certificate in compliance with Section 521A.001 of the Texas Transportation Code adopted during the 82nd Legislative session.

I have also been provided with a job aid that includes information regarding the process and procedures for the issuance of an election certificate.

As a result of the training, I am prepared to:

- disseminate accurate and consistent information regarding the requirements for an election certificate to my customers; and/or
- issue election certificates to customers in compliance with state legislative requirements.

For Customer Operations Employees:

I understand and agree that I **shall not** begin to process or issue an election certificate to anyone prior to January 3, 2012.

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

REGION/SERVICE/SECTION

SUPERVISOR

PRINTED NAME

DATE OF TRAINING